



Photo Courtesy of Spokane CVB/Alan Bisson

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Where the Heck is Spokane Anyway – and What Does the City Have to Offer?

The City of Spokane is home to some 195,500 residents, with around 418,000 people living in the metropolitan area. Spokane is located in the heart of the Inland Northwest, and it serves as a shopping, entertainment and medical hub for an area that includes eastern Washington, eastern Oregon, north Idaho, western Montana, and southern portions of Alberta and British Columbia, Canada. The Spokane River runs through downtown, with spectacular falls on the western end of the city core. Beautiful Riverfront Park is also in the heart of the city.

Spokane is an outdoor lover's paradise, with downhill and cross-country skiing, whitewater rafting, camping areas, hiking trails, numerous lakes and the Centennial Trail all in the city's back yard. It is home to the largest timed road race in the nation—Bloomsday—and the world's largest three-on-three street basketball tournament—Hoopfest.

Spokane's first residents were Native

Americans, and from the Spokanes the city got its name, meaning "Children of the Sun." Spokane became an incorporated city in 1881, encompassing 1.56 square miles. Back then, the city was known as Spokan Falls and had 350 residents. The "e" was added to Spokane in 1883, and "Falls" was dropped in 1891. The city suffered perhaps its biggest setback in 1889, when a fire ravaged downtown and destroyed 32 blocks.

A new City Hall was built at the southwest corner of Spokane Falls Boulevard and Wall Street in 1913, serving as the city's main offices until its centennial year—1981. The 1920s-era Montgomery Ward building on Spokane Falls Boulevard was renovated then to house the City's offices. Old City Hall is now home to several restaurants and shops.

In 1974, Spokane hosted the World's Fair (see *related story*, page 2), and its lasting legacy is Riverfront Park. Once a busy rail yard, the property was converted into a park to

host the World's Fair.

Today, Spokane continues to grow and change. It is the second largest city in the state and the largest city between Seattle and Minneapolis. As such, Spokane is critical to the economic growth the region and the state. With signature features like the 100-acre Riverfront Park, the magnificent Spokane River and Falls, the evolving University District and an endless selection of mountains, lakes and golf courses attracting interest to Spokane, it is no wonder that new investment is spurring revitalization throughout the city. New shopping, dining, lodging, and entertainment facilities and a host of family-friendly activities are attracting not only tourists, but also businesses looking to build or relocate.

Come to Spokane this July and experience all this for yourselves! Stay tuned to the next edition of the *River Review* to learn more about fun things to do while you are here.

Traveling to Spokane

U.S. Interstate 90 runs east to west, through the heart of Spokane. The city itself is about 35 miles east of the Washington/Idaho border.

Train, Bus and the Intermodal Transportation Center

This is home to both Amtrak and commercial bus service, located in the downtown district. The Spokane Intermodal Center is a comprehensive transport facility that serves as a station, re-fueling and service stop for Amtrak, as well as the Greyhound and Trailways bus companies. Amtrak serves Spokane with one daily train, *The Empire Builder*, which arrives in Spokane around midnight and departs at 2:15 a.m. The bus

station in Spokane is open 24/7. Contact Greyhound at (509) 624-5251 for schedules and fares. Trailways can be reached at (800) 366-3830.

City Bus Service

Spokane Transit Authority provides regional service throughout Spokane County on a regular schedule. For more details, visit them at www.spokanetransit.com.

Transportation by Air

Spokane International Airport is located about five miles west of the city limits. It is served by the following airlines:

Airline (Connecting Cities/Hubs):

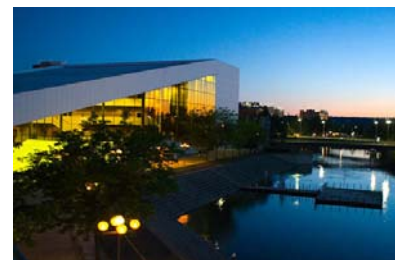
- Alaska / Horizon (Seattle, Wash. / Portland, Ore.);
- Delta (Salt Lake City, Utah);
- Frontier (Denver, Colo.);
- Northwest (Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minn.);
- Southwest (Various); United (Denver, Colo.);
- US Airways (Phoenix, Ariz.)



Spokane International Airport



The Clock Tower



Spokane Opera House & Convention Center

Silent Auction Benefits the Games

One Saturday night in late September, many Spokane VA Medical Center staff could be found at the Pend Oreille Pavilion at Northern Quest Casino, near Airway Heights. It was a night of fun and celebration for auction participants and a result of many long hours of work put in by the National Veterans Wheelchair Game (NVWG) Local Organizing Committee members.

The Kalispel Tribe did not hesitate when asked to be part of the fundraiser. The Tribe donated the Pend Oreille Pavilion, audiovisual services and appetizers. An endless list of items could be found at the auction. Items included services donated by local community businesses, baskets full of goodies, sports and recreation products, collectables, art, jewelry, autographed sports jerseys, massage and spa

treatments, restaurants, romantic get-aways and much more. There was something for everyone at the auction.

More than 225 tickets were sold and over \$13,500 was raised at the event.

If you have fundraising ideas, please contact Mark Lidbeck at (509) 434-7404.

Did You Know Spokane Hosted the World's Fair in 1974?

When you think about the World's Fair, cities that come to mind might be London, New York, San Francisco or Paris, but in 1974, Spokane, Washington put on a World's Fair that was unique. It was the only U.S. Fair of the Bicentennial era, and no smaller city had ever hosted the event. The Fair was officially opened by President Richard Nixon and during the six months it was open, over five million people—roughly 28 times the city's population—visited.

THE SYMBOL OF THE FAIR

The Möbius Strip, named after German mathematician and astronomer August Ferdinand Möbius, was chosen because it is an unbroken continuum, just as man and his environment are forever joined. The green represented the earth, the blue the water, and the white the air. It was drawn by Spokane artist Lloyd Carlson.



FUN FACTS

- While some very famous artists performed at the Fair, a lot of famous people just came for a visit. They include basketball star Wilt Chamberlain, Spokane native Bing Crosby, Playboy founder Hugh Hefner, evangelist Oral Roberts, Crown Prince Tupouto'a from the Kingdom of Tonga and then-unknown Governor of Georgia, Jimmy Carter.
- A July 13 concert at the Boeing International Amphitheatre was interrupted when three streakers ran across the stage.
- China's pavilion is now the Walla Walla Community College theatre. It's still known as the China Pavilion and much of the original artwork and the display areas are still inside.
- Expo '74 did its part in trying to switch the U.S. to the metric system. The "Bimeasurement Resolution" decreed that all signs would be marked with both imperial and metric measurements.



- Expo '74 was immortalized on a U.S. postage stamp designed by pop art icon Peter Max.
- One of the cooler-sounding things that never got built was "Old Spokane." It was supposed to be a 14.5 acre theme park, themed to reflect the 1800s.
- Expo '74 was not Spokane's first major fair. In 1890, Spokane Falls (as it was then known) hosted the Northwestern Industrial Exposition. It was called "the World's Fair of the Northwest." It may not have been exactly that, but it did get favorable reviews in the press and even sported some attractions from the 1889 Paris World's Fair.

Missing Something From the Last Games?

A camera, watch, locket with pictures of small children, and blue tooth were turned in to the Lost and Found at the Qwest Center Omaha last July, and they are still looking for their rightful owners.

If you think that any of these items may be yours, please contact Chris Shipp, Chief of Voluntary Service at the VA Medical Center in Omaha. He can be reached at (402) 346-8800, ext. 3284.

Check the on-site newsletter each day of the 2009 Games for a listing of Lost and Found items turned in during the week of the Games in Spokane.

Hosts of the 2009 National Veterans Wheelchair Games

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Roll'n On The River!

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We're on the Web!!!

For more information about this year's event, be sure to visit: www.wheelchairgames.va.gov